

Dupuy 0

**American Foreign Policy and Representation of Germans and French
in Animated Feature Films since World War II: The Little Mermaid's Pact
with the Devil**

A Senior honors Thesis

Presented in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for graduation with
distinction in German in the undergraduate colleges of The Ohio State University
by

Élodie Bérengère Gaël Dupuy

The Ohio State University
December, 2006

Project Advisor: Professor Neil Jacobs, Department of Germanic
Languages and Literatures

American Foreign Policy and Representation of Germans and French in
Animated Feature Films since World War II: The Little Mermaid's Pact with
the Devil

“French women don’t shave their legs.” “Germans eat sauerkraut and bratwurst, and have blond hair.” We all know these stereotypes, but why is it that children, like adults, can recite practically identical descriptions of French and Germans? The media in America reach millions of people daily through various programs. Filmmakers, commercial writers, even cartoonists use the media to influence citizens’ concepts of other cultures and ethnicities. Children learn from a young age various characteristics that they identify with foreigners. These stereotypes are perpetuated and magnified as the children grow into adults. But where do these stereotypes come from? If citizens are influenced by the media, then by whom or what is the media influenced? My research supports the argument that there is a correlation between American foreign policy towards France and Germany and how this translates to representation of French and Germans in animated box office hits since 1945, which include primarily Disney feature animations as well as some DreamWorks animations. In support of this claim, Disney and DreamWorks films will be closely examined to determine what roles animated characters play in movies, as well as the significance of the setting, stereotyping and depiction of foreigners. Additionally, I will research the state of foreign affairs between the United States

and France and Germany at the time of production for each of these films, and draw parallels between the pattern of foreign policy and the representation of those countries in animated films. Ultimately, my conclusion is that the positive or negative attributes of French and German stereotypes appear to vary directly with whether or not America is on good or bad terms with the French and German governments. Although France and Germany have long been allies of America, in 2003 the War in Iraq crisis has led to tension between these world powers when both countries refused to support the Bush Administration's policies towards Iraq. This recent conflict between the countries appears to have influenced negative stereotyping of French and Germans in modern media.

Stereotyping in the U.S. begins at a young age. When children are only two or three, their parents start exposing them to the world of media. Frequently Disney plays a significant role in forming children's first ideas of what characteristics to associate with certain cultures. Yet, do parents fully realize the amount of political references present in Disney movies? Close examination of **Disney's Masterpiece Feature Film collection** reveals that the portrayal of French and Germans in Disney movies varies directly with the state of Franco-American and German-American affairs.

According to Charles Cogan, "The difficulty in US-French relations stems from the period of World War II, when France became permanently diminished as a great power in the eyes of the Roosevelt administration." (Cogan, 55) After World War II, France and its population did not exist in Disney movies until 1950. At this point, Disney released *Cinderella*, which is actually a French fairy tale, *Cendrillon*, written by Charles Perrault in 1697, and titled Cinderella upon translation into English. Although lacking famous French monuments such as the Eiffel tower, the movie appears to take place in

France – a conclusion which can be inferred from the small architectural references. “La Fleur-de-Lis” has long stood as a symbol of French royalty and has been expanded to represent Paris and the entire country of France. (Pastoureau, 1994) This symbol is the primary ornamentation throughout the castle where Cinderella lives; almost every secret door the mice use to access various rooms in the castle is engraved with this symbol. In addition, when the Duke arrives to Cinderella’s house to see if there are any maidens whose feet fit the glass slipper, he addresses the young ladies as “Mademoiselle,” a direct reference to the French language.

Five years later, in 1955, Disney released *Lady and the Tramp*. This film marked the first references to Germany since World War II. On the surface *Lady and the Tramp* is the story of dog’s relationship with her neighbors and a stray, but on another level, this movie can be interpreted as Disney’s commemoration of the events during and after World War II. In the movie, a couple receives Lady, a puppy, for Christmas, and a few months later she befriends neighboring dogs, Jock and Trusty. One day Lady and her friends meet another dog named Tramp. At the outset no one trusts or likes him; however, they eventually warm up to him and they become friends. Later, Lady’s owners have a baby and go out of town, leaving Lady behind with the babysitter, Aunt Sarah. Due to a misunderstanding with two Siamese cats, Aunt Sarah believes Lady to be a danger to the baby and tries to get her muzzled. Lady escapes, only to run into Tramp. Although she is initially suspicious of his intent, Tramp takes Lady out for the night and their relationship blossoms into romance. The next day, Lady wakes up homesick and wishes to return to her residence. While on the way home, Tramp proposes to Lady that they run through a chicken coop for amusement. Despite Lady’s

objections, Tramp insists on running through the coop. The angry farmer calls the pound, and the two dogs try to run away, but the dogcatcher captures Lady. Luckily, Lady's collar proves to the dogcatchers that she is not a stray, and after a brief stay at the pound, Aunt Sarah brings her home. Aunt Sarah is angry that Lady escaped, so she chains Lady to a doghouse. That night, to Lady's horror, she spies a rat going into the baby's room and she calls on Tramp to help. Tramp kills the rat but in doing so knocks over the baby's cradle and wakes Aunt Sarah, who in turn fears that Tramp is a danger to the baby and calls the pound to have Tramp taken away. Lady explains to her friends Tramp's innocence, and Jock and Trusty take off to save Tramp. Trusty is a rather inept dog that has lost his sense of smell and for a while can't pick up the trail of the pound cart. Once on the trail, he and Jock chase down the dogcatcher's cart. Unfortunately, while freeing Tramp, Trusty gets crushed by the cart and Jock mourns what he fears is the loss of his friend. During Tramp's rescue, the couple comes home and Lady leads them to where Tramp and Jock are mourning Trusty. At the end of the movie, viewers are surprised by Trusty's appearance at Lady's and Tramp's first Christmas together, where he tells tales of his Grandfather's war experience to Lady's and Tramp's puppies.

Close examination of the four lead characters reveals the following: Lady is an American Cocker Spaniel, Tramp is part Schnauzer, Jock is a Scottish terrier and Trusty is a Bloodhound. The story, at first glance, contains no references to WWII. However, these breeds are what link the plot to the commemoration of the Second World War. The more minor of the four characters are Jock and Trusty. Jock is a Scottish Terrier, a breed that originates in Scotland. Although Scotland is not the same country as Britain, it is a constituent country of the UK. Trusty is a Bloodhound, a breed native to France. Tramp

– the trouble maker – is part Schnauzer, a breed indigenous to Germany. This blatant reference to the Allied Powers and Germany continues with the main character, an American Cocker Spaniel.

Lady and the Tramp's plot can be reduced to this: a dog (Lady) is friends with two other dogs (Jock and Trusty). She meets a third dog (Tramp) whom she doesn't initially trust but eventually befriends. One day she gets lost and trusts Tramp to help her. She falls for his innocence and the next day, because of trouble he causes she is locked in a pound. When she gets out, she spies trouble at home and Tramp comes to help. Because of his clumsy way of handling the situation, he is sent to the pound. Jock and Trusty try to help and Trusty ends up severely injured.

With this simplified plot, we have a very loose reenactment of events of the world from 1918-1950; however, they are not in a strict chronological order. America didn't trust Germany because of WWI. Neither did France nor England. After establishing the Treaty of Versailles, which was very restrictive on Germany, the Allied Forces gave Germany another chance. Similarly, neither Lady, Jock, nor Trusty was too fond of Tramp at first, but all three eventually accepted him. Despite America's firm watch over Germany, the events of the early 1930's lead Germany astray and back into another World War – a war which again included France, America, and Britain. Similarly, Tramp behaves well while in the presence of Lady, and the two enjoy a safe evening on the town. However, despite her initial good influence, the next afternoon Tramp returns to his naughty ways when he chases the chickens in the coop, despite objections from Lady. As a result, Lady is captured and sent to the pound. This parallels the fact that despite strong American surveillance, when Hitler came to power, he led

Germany into a political disaster. As a result, America, which had no desire to be involved in another World War, found itself a victim of Germany's actions.

When Lady (American) arrives at the pound, the dogcatcher locks her in a cell with other dogs – a Wiener dog (German), an English Bulldog, and a mutt- arguably part Griffon Nivernais (French). Also present is a mutt named Peg. In the neighboring cell, there is a Russian Wolfhound named Boris.

At the beginning of the scene, the dogs in the cell ask the Wiener dog how much longer until the hole to freedom is complete. He is, ironically, the only dog digging the hole. True to his German heritage, the Wiener dog speaks with a German accent. This scene is consistent with German history post WWII, when Germany was divided among the French, Soviets, English, and Americans. Also, Germany was physically separated into two parts, East Germany and West Germany. The Soviets controlled East Germany, or the German Democrat Republic (GDR), and separated their section of the country from West Germany with barbed wire fencing, all the while partaking in Germany's reconstruction. In this scene, the Russian dog is physically separated from the other dogs by iron bars. However, throughout the scene, Boris sticks his head out between the bars in order to participate in conversations and activities with the other dogs. Also, much like the German government was scrutinized and limited by the four occupying countries after the Second World War, all of the Wiener dog's actions are monitored by the occupying dogs – French, British, American, and Russian.

The reactions of the western powers to Germany post WWI to the 1950s are similar to Lady and her neighbors' reaction to Tramp throughout the movie. The Western Powers trusted Germany before World War I, and then were betrayed by

Germany's actions. Lady and her neighbors were hesitant to trust Tramp, but eventually they did, only to be betrayed by his irresponsibility and actions in the chicken coop. Although angry after the war, the allies eventually began to trust Germany, only to be betrayed again by the Second World War. After Lady and her friends begin to trust Tramp again, he disappoints them once more by getting sent to the pound. France fell while trying to limit the damages caused by Germany's actions; Trusty was hit by the cart when he was trying to prevent further complications for Tramp. England, France's neighbor and strong ally, was deeply affected by France's fall. Although in a slightly different context, Jock, Trusty's neighbor and best friend, was equally moved by his friend's misfortune.

Lady rescues Tramp from the pound, much like America led the reconstruction of Germany during the post-war period. With Lady as a mentor, Tramp learns the error of his ways and becomes Lady's spouse. Jock and Trusty also accept him into their social circle. The bonds that Trusty and Jock build with Tramp never compare to the bond of marriage Lady and Tramp share. This corresponds to the rapport between America and Germany after WWII, when America orchestrated the reconstruction of Germany, and France and England followed albeit less enthusiastically.

Finally, the last overt reference to Germany and World War II lies in the relationships that Tramp has with other characters. During the war, Germany had allied itself with Italy and Japan. Several times in the movie, Tramp goes to an Italian restaurant for dinner. Each time, Tony the cook who speaks with an Italian accent and has brown curly hair, insists to his friend that they give Tramp the best treatment. Although subtle, this parallels Italy's alliance with Germany during the war.

Japan's attack of Pearl Harbor was unrelated to Hitler's motivations for the war in Europe. In fact, the two countries were not allied until after the attack. Pearl Harbor was also the only well-publicized attack on U.S. soil. The Japanese are portrayed as Aunt Sarah's Siamese cats, Si and Am. The cats have Asian eyes and names, and at one point wear rice hats. The music accompanying the song that they sing has a strong Asian influence. During their song, the cats terrorize Lady in her own house by destroying her property. Most importantly, the cats do this independently of Tramp. In conclusion, there is strong evidence supporting that the underlying events in this film can be interpreted as a couched tribute to the events that occurred from after World War I through after WWII.

Disney's *Sleeping Beauty* was the next film to reference Germany's culture. In movie, none of the characters have German, French, or Russian accents, nor does the movie appear to be set in Germany. However, the inspiration for the castle where Aurora is rescued came from Schloss Neuschwanstein in Bavaria. Neuschwanstein is a castle that was built in the late 1880s by Ludwig II. Ludwig had always been fascinated with the Grimm brothers and their fairytales, and in his last moments of madness he commissioned the construction of this castle, effectively the last castle built in Europe. Ludwig's passion for fairytales was the reason that Neuschwanstein was designed neither for protection nor in the contemporary style, but rather with an idealization of Bavarian and Black Forest architecture like the type found in fairy tales. Appropriately, Schloss Neuschwanstein was the inspiration for the castle in Disney's *Sleeping Beauty*.

In 1956 tensions between France and the United States spiked. France, which at the time had a 25% Communist electorate, attacked Egypt. Egypt's developing

relationship with the Communist Soviet Union and France's high percentage of Communist electorate, led the United States, politically anti-communist, to respond by forcing France out of Egypt. (Roger, 1959) Coincidentally, *Sleeping Beauty* is originally a French fairy tale. Unlike *Cinderella*, this film strayed from the original French plot; animators instead used Tchaikovsky's ballet for inspiration.

From the period of 1956-1969 the relationship between the U.S. and France was stagnant, in part because Charles De Gaulle was president of France. Coincidentally, during that time not a single, out of four, Disney movies released contained any references to France. However, in 1969 De Gaulle resigned, and Pompidou won the election for the presidency in France. With this new French president, America had renewed hope for improved relations with France, albeit with reservations. In 1970, just one year after the unpopular De Gaulle* was out of office, Disney released *The Aristocats*, an enchanting animation centered in France, which invites children into the world of French culture. This was the first time that Disney dedicated an entire film to the promotion of French culture. The most important of the plethora of characters in this film are the cats: Duchesse (the mother), Marie (kitten), Toulouse (kitten), Berlioz (kitten), Abraham DeLacey Giuseppe Casey Thomas O'Malley (alley cat), Scat Cat (alley cat band leader), Shun Gon (band member), Hit Cat (band member) Peppo (band member), and Billy Boss (band member). Next there are the two dogs that help solve the catnapping, Napoleon and Lafayette. The owner of the cats is Madame Bonfamille, and she has a butler, Edgar Balthazar. Madame has a lawyer that helps her write her will, whose name is Georges Hautecourt. Finally, there are two more important characters, a mouse named Roquefort, and a horse named Frou Frou.

* This refers to his unpopularity in the United States, not in France. De Gaulle was actually very beloved in France.

In *The Aristocats*, Madame Bonfamille is a rich elderly aristocrat who loves her cats. She invites her lawyer to write her will. While her butler Edgar is eavesdropping, she tells her attorney she wishes to leave her entire fortune to her cats. Only upon the cats' death shall the remainder of her fortune be passed on to Edgar. After hearing this the butler drugs the cats to sleep and kidnaps them. He takes them out to the countryside, but before he has time to dispose of the cats, he is chased by two guard dogs, Napoleon and Lafayette. The basket with the cats falls into a nearby ravine, and Edgar leaves. The next day, Duchesse and her kittens are trying to determine how to get home when Thomas O'Malley meets them. He offers to take them back to Paris and the five embark on a journey home. Meanwhile, Madame is in despair at having lost her cats, and Edgar is ecstatic. While feeding Frou Frou, Edgar tells her he is responsible for the missing cats. Outraged, Roquefort the mouse and Frou Frou come up with a plan to find the cats and bring them home. After an adventurous day of traveling, the five cats arrive at Thomas O'Malley's place, only to find that an entire band of musical cats, also O'Malley's friends, is staying there. The cats have a party, and after the kittens go to bed Duchesse and Thomas have a romantic night on the rooftops of Paris. The next day, the cats go home, but before they can make it to their mistress, Edgar captures them again and puts them into a trunk which he intends to ship to Timbuktu. Duchesse sends Roquefort to get Thomas O'Malley, who in turn sends Roquefort to get assistance from the band members. After almost being lunch, Roquefort manages to bring the band to Madame's house, and all the animals unite in a battle against Edgar. The battle concludes with Edgar in the trunk destined for Timbuktu. Thomas O'Malley becomes an aristocat, and they all live happily ever after.

Unlike in *Lady and the Tramp*, the plot of *The Aristocats* isn't full of hidden meanings. The writers of this movie use names to educate children about French culture. Madame Bonfamille's name, which means "old money," reflects her high standing as an aristocrat in Paris. Her attorney, Georges Hautecourt's name is also suggestive of his profession, as it means "high court." The mouse's name, Roquefort, is the name of one of France's finest cheeses. While Frou Frou, the horse's name, has no French meaning, it is, however, the equivalent of the popular pet name "Fluffy" in English. Although the name Duchesse carries no historical significance, it means "duchess" and reflects her high social standing. The kittens' names reflect historical figures in France. To substantiate that this wasn't a coincidence, the writers gave each kitten a name that fit its hobbies. In the beginning of the movie, Duchesse tells her kittens to work on their education. The kittens respond by each engaging in different "high culture" activities. Marie jumps onto the piano and starts to sing about arpeggios. The kitten Marie does not appear to mirror any one particular French singer named Marie. However, during the époque when this movie was created, there were several famous female singers in France named Marie. The one most similar to Marie the kitten is Marie Laforet. She was well known for her unusual voice quality and popular hits. Even more than for her talent, Marie Laforet was famous for her beauty. Just like Marie the kitten, Marie Laforet had big almond shaped green/blue eyes, with long dark lashes. Also well known during this time was a female vocalist named Marie-Paul Belle. Her beauty did not make her famous, but her comic lyrics did. Marie France (Garcia) is yet another well-known pop artist of the era. Also there was Marie Laurencin. Although she was known for her poetry rather than her singing, Marie Laurencin was romantically engaged with one of the

most prominent aristocrats in Paris in the early 1900s. A parallel can be drawn between Marie the kitten's aristocat standing and Marie Laurencin's aristocratic one. Again, though the kitten was not necessarily modeled after one particular person, her name "Marie" reflects pop icons and an aristocrat of the time.

Marie's brother, Toulouse starts to paint, using red, orange, and green. This name stands for Henri de Toulouse-Lautrec, a French painter from the 19th century who popularized colorful paintings of the Moulin Rouge and the "Tournée du Chat Noir." He also utilized a lot of orange, green, and red in his paintings. The last kitten, Berlioz, jumps on the piano and starts to play while his sister sings along. Part way through the song, he breaks from the melody and improvises a portion of the song. Again, Berlioz isn't just a random name. Berlioz was a French romantic composer also from the 19th century. Interestingly, both Toulouse-Lautrec and Berlioz were from the 19th century, and at the end of Berlioz's song Toulouse joins him on the piano.

O'Malley's name is notably lengthy: Abraham DeLacey Giuseppe Casey Thomas O'Malley "the Alley Cat." Although lacking historical significance, the excessive length of O'Malley's name is a cultural reference to child-naming in France. At birth, American children are traditionally given a first, middle, and last name. In France, however, children are often given two or more middle names; some names are in honor of relatives, others are mothers' maiden names, and still others are for people who like several names for their children. The purpose behind this extensive naming behavior can be interpreted as a search for greater individuality. A great example of this would be my father's name, Alain Armand Charles Albert Maurice Jean Dupuy, which has the same amount of names as Thomas O'Malley's full name.

Perhaps because they are only secondary characters, the band members' names don't represent French historical figures; however, they do perpetuate the stereotyping that Disney employs. For example, there is Scat Cat. He is the band leader, he speaks with a James Brown voice, and his fur is black. This teaches children to associate that type of voice with a black exterior, and with music. Shun Gun is the Siamese cat, and his depiction encourages children to identify sound combinations like Shun Gun with Asian eyes and light exterior. Peppo the Italian cat speaks with an Italian accent. Although a minor character, Big Boss the cat is German. His role as a band member is particularly significant because it stereotypes Germans as bullies. When Roquefort comes to get help, Big Boss is the one who tries to eat him. He is also the tough cat throughout the film. At this point in history, the Berlin Wall had been erected for about five years, separating the GDR from Western Germany. Interestingly, Boss Cat, a German, can speak with a Russian accent. This correlates to the Russian occupation of the GDR during this time. While the messages are never blatant, children are still exposed to the idea that the German cat is the bully. Duchesse, one of the main characters, speaks with an accent. The role is voiced by Eva Gabor. She and her sister, Zsa Zsa were Hungarian aristocrats who adored Paris. In fact, Zsa Zsa was a star in the original *Moulin Rouge*. Though both Hungarian, these women are often associated with Paris. (Daniel Collins, p.c.)

The next pair of important historical characters is Napoleon and Lafayette. Napoleon is portrayed as a Bloodhound (a French dog) and Lafayette is a Basset Hound (also originating from France). Throughout the entire animation, Napoleon continually makes comments about being superior to Lafayette, being in charge, and other things of

that nature. This again is a reference to France's military and political history. Napoleon is considered to have been the greatest general and leader in the history of France, and although Lafayette certainly made a place for himself in the history books as a general, he will never be as acclaimed as Napoleon. Accordingly, Napoleon, and even arguably Lafayette, is a name that young children are expected to recognize.

Aside from just the characters, *The Aristocats* offers views of many famous sites in Paris as well as a look at French daily life. The first views of Paris are offered while the cats are being catnapped. Edgar drives the cats past the Eiffel Tower, L'Arc de Triomphe, and Les Champs Elysées. While Roquefort is being chased by the band members, he runs past a man sitting at a café. The man is stereotypically skinny, wearing a black beret, has a long white beard, and is drinking an entire bottle of red wine. Another example is when the cats run into the stereotypical French cook, who has a big pot belly and pencil moustache and yells "Sacré Bleu!" when his goose escapes. Still another example is when Thomas O'Malley tries to steal some milk from a milkman. This man is again skinny, has a big red nose, a pencil moustache, and he yells "Sapristie" and "Sacré Bleu!"* An important note about the men in this film is that although they are stereotyped with a beret, a moustache, or both, they retain very masculine features and attitudes. This will change in the future.

From 1946 to 1954, France fought the First Indochina War. The war proved to be a disaster. France lost an enormous amount of soldiers. Because of this past experience, coupled with France's recent war experience in Algeria, De Gaulle advised America not to engage in war in Vietnam. Nixon disregarded these words of advice, and

* These words are comparable to terminology that older generation Americans would employ when masking curse words, i.e. "What in tarnation!" or "Jesus, Mary and Joseph!"

in 1965 American troops were deployed to Vietnam in hopes that the United States could prevent the spread of communism. The time spent there was disastrous. The U.S. lost thousands upon thousands of soldiers, and not much was gained from these efforts. Finally, in 1973, the last troops were withdrawn from Vietnam. The following event in Disney supports the claim that America may have been angered at its failure in Vietnam, and also angered that France had been correct in warning the United States about endeavors in Vietnam.

Again, an argument can be made that the world of Walt Disney followed suit. The company had been in the process of producing a movie about a fox, which they were going to name *Reynard the Fox*. Reynard the fox is actually an important character from medieval Western European literature. The name Reynard mimics the word “renard” in French meaning “fox”. For reasons unspecified, Disney decided to change course and rather than finishing *Reynard the Fox*, in 1973 Walt Disney released *Robin Hood*. This movie stars a fox as the main character, Robin Hood.

This movie marked the last of Disney’s blockbuster success stories until 1989. From 1974-1989, Disney released six feature animated films. All of these films were deemed unsuccessful box office films.

In 1989 Walt Disney released *The Little Mermaid*. 1989 marked an important year for Germany, as this was the year the Berlin Wall came down. Tensions between France and America had grown again; the United States was anticipating a free Germany, whereas France was more skeptical. In the past, rocky relationships between France and Germany could be correlated to an absence of references of these countries. This time, the rising tensions seem to have influenced the animators in a negative way.

Hans Christian Anderson's fairy tale of *The Little Mermaid* is well known. However, a character summary might prove useful. The main character is Princess Ariel, the sea Princess. Her friends are Scuttle (a seagull) and Flounder (a fish). Her father is King Triton, and he has a little helper named Horatio Felonious Ignacious Crustaceous Sebastian. Triton's enemy is Ursula the sea witch, and she has her two helpers Flotsam and Jetsam. Finally, there's Ariel's Prince Charming, Prince Eric. He has an advisor, Grimsby, and a French cook, Chef Louis.

In this film, the only character to have an outrageous French accent is Chef Louis. A general description of him would be chubby, short, long pencil moustache, big red nose, and gappy teeth. What's more important than his appearance or accent, however, is his role in the movie. Whereas up to this film French people had never been portrayed as inept, in *The Little Mermaid* Chef Louis is portrayed as an incompetent, bumbling fool. He fights with the food he is trying to cook and catches himself on fire after destroying the kitchen. He often exclaims the stereotypical line "Sacré bleu!" and laughs with the stereotypical laugh of Maurice Chevalier, a famous French actor whose "hon hon hon" laugh has become the stereotype for French people in the American popular media. As the French are famous for their fine cuisine, this blundering depiction is offensive.

Also, in the scene where Ursula is concocting the potion to turn Ariel into a human, she mentions "Beluga" which is a type of caviar. However, her use of caviar in the potion is ironic. Caviar is a staple in gourmet French food, and although earlier France had to import caviar from the United States, in recent years France has become one of the top producers of caviar. (Morris) She also holds Ariel's voice in a snail shell.

Snails, or escargot, also are associated with upper-class French. Ursula's use of such expensive luxuries in the potion makes her seem supercilious – an attribute often assigned to the French.

German history is also very prominent in this Disney movie, which again was released in 1989, the year the Berlin wall came down. Interestingly enough, *The Little Mermaid* was scheduled for release back in the 1930s but was delayed due to WWII. (Disney Archives) The meaning behind this delay and the plot is subtle but powerful. In addition to French stereotyping, *The Little Mermaid* appears to be a new interpretation to the story of Faust. In Marlow's version of *Dr. Faustus*, the main character's name is Dr. Faustus. He is a man of extraordinary education and extreme dissatisfaction with the limitations of his education. One day in a fit of despair Dr. Faustus agrees to sell his soul to Mephistopheles, the devil's minion, in exchange for his heart's desire. He is granted twenty-four years on earth with Mephistopheles. With the devil as his servant, he explores other countries, the atmosphere, the Heavens and Hell. However, when the twenty-four years expire, his soul will belong to the devil. During his time with Mephistopheles, Dr. Faustus toils with the idea of repenting to avoid spending eternity in Hell. However, Mephistopheles continually manages to convince him to side with the Devil. Finally, in the last hours of his life, Dr. Faustus repents and goes to Heaven.

The Little Mermaid, although seemingly nothing more than a fairy tale, has a striking resemblance to Marlow's *Dr. Faustus*. Ariel is a dissatisfied mermaid who has explored the ocean, and all the human artifacts she has found in the ocean, to their fullest and is yearning to learn about a world beyond her physical limitations. One day, she goes to the surface and falls in love with a human, Prince Eric. After seeing Ariel's infatuation

with the human, Ursula, the evil Sea Witch, summons Ariel to her lair. Ursula promises to change the mermaid into a human for three days on two conditions: 1. that Ariel give Ursula her voice for the duration of the three days, and 2. if Ariel fails to get a kiss from her Prince, she belongs to Ursula for the rest of her life. Ariel signs the pact giving her life to Ursula and goes to the surface. By the end of the third day, with still no kiss, she regrets her decision. After an initial battle with Ursula on a ship, Ariel, Prince Eric and Ariel's friends fight another fiercer battle in the ocean and defeat Ursula. In the end, after Ariel apologizes to her father, he turns her into a human permanently so that she can live happily ever after.

This plot is very similar to Marlow's play; the most notable difference being an absence of religion. Much like Dr. Faustus, Ariel has explored everything within her physical limitations and still wants to learn more. In order to fulfill this desire, she, like Dr. Faustus, sells her soul in exchange for time in a place beyond her limitations. After experiencing the world beyond them, both Dr. Faustus and Ariel repent – Dr. Faustus repents to God; Ariel apologizes to her father. As a result, Dr. Faustus is admitted into Heaven, and similarly Ariel is granted her happy ending.

What's more interesting, however, is the global meaning of this story. After WWI the allies felt that the sanctions they'd placed on Germany would control the country. Disney was prepared to release this movie during that time. However, Hitler unexpectedly gained power and Germany rebelled against the Ally's restrictions. Disney decided to hold off on releasing the movie. After WWII, American-German relations continuously improved. In 1961, the construction of the Wall of Berlin began. This construction ended in the mid 1960's. Twenty four years later, after suffering for the

devastation Hitler had incurred, Germany was liberated in 1989 when the Berlin Wall fell and East and West Germany were reunited. It appears as though Disney acknowledged that Germany had had its own Faustian experience, and in commemoration released a Faustian *The Little Mermaid*. Germans had “signed a pact with the Devil” when they elected Hitler as their leader and then gained power for several years. Torn between two political ideologies, the communists and the capitalist, the heart of Germany, Berlin, became physically separated by a wall. Nearly twenty-four years later, the Wall came down and Germany had its new beginning.

One year after the release of *The Little Mermaid*, in 1990, Iraq invaded Kuwait on the pretext that Kuwait was illegally slant drilling petroleum across the Iraqi border. This invasion was addressed immediately by the United Nations. They imposed economic sanctions on Iraq, and hostilities between Iraq and the U.N. grew. Iraq refused to retreat from Kuwait, and Western powers feared that Iraq would continue forth and invade Saudi Arabia. Because Saudi Arabia produced a majority of the world’s petroleum supply, Europe, the U.S., and the rest of the world feared that Iraq would establish a monopoly on petroleum. In late 1990, the United Nations ratified Resolution 660, stating that Iraq was to retreat from Kuwait. In August of 1990, President Bush Sr. deployed U.S. troops to the Iraqi border. Saddam Hussein did not withdraw from Kuwait. In response to Hussein’s refusal to comply, the United States formed a coalition of 32 different countries. Among these 32 countries were France and Germany. The United Nations passed Resolution 678 that gave Iraq until January 15th 1991 to withdraw troops. (Gresh, 70-77) This was November 29, 1990, just under a year before Disney released *Beauty and the Beast*.

On November 13th 1991, Disney's *Beauty and the Beast* hit theaters in America. Unlike in *The Aristocats*, which had emphasized upper class culture in France, Disney's release of *Beauty and the Beast* focused on a girl growing up in a provincial town in France. Her name is Belle and she is the inventor's daughter. She likes to read and is proud of her father's work. Conversely, the residents of her village think her father is crazy and that she is odd for enjoying literature. Gaston is the beau of the village; he is handsome, a good hunter, and very macho. He decides that because Belle is the most beautiful girl in the village, he is going to marry her. Prior to his proposal, Belle's father Maurice successfully builds a machine and takes off for the fair where he hopes to make money for himself and his daughter. While he is gone, Gaston goes to Belle's house and proposes. Although he expected a "yes," Belle turns him down. He is humiliated and swears he'll find a way to marry her.

Meanwhile, Maurice is riding through the woods when his horse, Philippe, is frightened. Philippe takes off and brings his master to the gates of a large castle. Because the weather is bad, Maurice enters hoping to find a place to stay the night. He is greeted by a candle stick and a clock, Lumière and Cogsworth. Despite vehement objection from Cogsworth, Lumière insists on inviting Maurice into their castle. Soon after he gets settled, Maurice hears Beast, a beast and also a main character of the movie, coming into the room. Beast is angry at the "trespasser" and throws him into a cell in the tower. Philippe escapes and returns to his home to find Belle. When Belle realizes her father is in trouble, she and Philippe take off to go find Maurice. When she arrives at the castle, Lumière and Cogsworth get excited. Their master, Beast, had been cruel to an enchantress, and as a result the entire castle had been put under a spell. The only way to

break it was for a woman to fall in love with Beast before the petals on his enchanted rose all fell off.

The prospect of a woman in the castle stirs all its inhabitants and they show Belle the way to her father. When she sees the state he's in she is devastated, and offers to trade her liberty for her father's to the beast. Beast agrees, and she becomes his prisoner. That night, after refusing to dine with Beast, Belle gets hungry. Lumière again ignores Cogsworth's hesitations and puts on a spectacular show for their guest. As time goes by, Belle and Beast start to fall in love with each other. After a romantic evening, Belle confides in Beast that she misses her father. Beast, now understanding what it means to be selfless, releases Belle. When she arrives home, she finds her father sick in bed. Outside, Gaston is waiting to blackmail Belle into marrying him. His plan is to have Maurice sent to the sanitarium on account of his tales of the Beast that had captured Belle. His plan is foiled however, because prior to leaving Beast, Belle took Beast's enchanted mirror, and uses it to prove Beast's existence. Gaston manipulates the beast's story and convinces the villagers that they aren't safe as long as the beast is still alive. He locks Belle and her father up and takes off to kill the beast. Belle tells her father that Beast is kind and her friend, and the two of them, with the help from a piece of enchanted china, set off to save Beast. Beast and Gaston have a fight on the roof of Beast's castle, and when Beast sees Belle has returned he walks away to go meet her. Unfortunately, Gaston takes advantage of the fact that Beast's back is turned to him and he stabs Beast. As Beast is dying, the last petal from his enchanted rose starts to fall. Just before it hits the table, Belle professes her love to Beast. In a cloud of pixie dust, Beast and all his workers are turned back into humans.

True to Disney's style, the animators for this film were very accurate in their representation of a town in Provence. The architecture of the buildings, the cobblestone paved streets, and the surrounding wheat fields resemble what one would see in France. Even the types of buildings – the Boulangerie, Librairie, Patisserie and so on are typical French shops that one could find on any street corner in Provence or even Paris. The first song, "Bonjour" clearly depicts the hustle and bustle of everyday life in a country town. The song also begins with "Bonjour," the French word for "hello." The town is happy and peaceful. The caricature of the village people is also predominantly true to French townspeople. The baker is wearing the typical white apron and has a belly, the hair dresser is skinny, elegant and has a big nose, and the librarian is short with tufts of white hair. In general, the men are either skinny or chubby and have moustaches or some other form of facial hair. They also are portrayed as flirtatious because of the way they are constantly gawking at women. The younger women in this movie are all very thin and pretty, but they do not age gracefully. The older women are drawn to look like your typical older country woman; they are a little larger, and their hard work around the farm shows in their build and dress. They are depicted as the dominant partner and the women keep their husbands from flirting with younger women. Interestingly, despite the widespread stereotype, the women are not portrayed as hairy or smelly.

The main characters of the cartoon, Belle, Gaston, her father and Beast are very different than the stereotypical village folk. Belle resembles a typical Disney princess, yet despite being French she speaks with a standard American accent. Gaston is burlier than the average French man. He also has no French accent. Belle's father is the only of the four main characters that really looks foreign. He's short, has a furry moustache, and

wild hair. Beast, aside from looking like a monster, also has no resemblance to a “French” person. He lacks the skinny moustache, and he has no French accent. Of the secondary characters, Lumière is the one who is most stereotypically French. His suave and flirtatious attitude, his slenderness, *savoir faire*, physique and use of “*Sacré Bleu*” encourage children to recognize these traits as being French. His voice is directly drawn from the French performer Maurice Chevalier. Also, the only female role to be depicted as French is the feather duster. Much like Lumière, she is skinny, flirtatious, has a French accent, and dresses like a “French maid.” Generally, the characters in this movie portray French people in a positive light. They are hospitable, friendly, passionate, and compassionate.

Also, in the scene where Belle is enjoying her first dinner at the castle, the silverware, china, and decorations put on a performance of a lifetime for her. The spoons combine and recombine to create images of Paris, such as the Eiffel Tower. The general impression the dinner leaves is that France is a country of exquisite cuisine, elaborate dinners, and kind people. This representation of French people is much kinder than the one the French received in 1989. Unlike in the late 1980s when France and America were clashing on the political front, this time the French had been strong supporters of America’s goals in Iraq.

In February of 1991, President Bush Sr. declared a cease fire and the Gulf War came to an end. Along with being supporters of the American invasion in Iraq, France was one of only two European countries to deploy forces there. Germany did not deploy troops to Iraq, but supported the United States financially in its endeavor to liberate

Kuwait. A year after the Gulf War, in 1992, Disney released one of its biggest successes yet, *Aladdin*.

Aladdin marked the first Disney animated film to use computer animation.

Whereas in the past, Disney films were in production for two or more years before being released, computer animation cut production time. This is evidenced by the increase in frequency of Disney releases. Prior to computer animation, Disney animations were released in 3-5 year intervals. After the introduction of computer animation, Disney released an animated film almost every year. In the movie, a young peasant man, Aladdin, meets the Sultan's daughter, Princess Jasmine, in a market place and immediately falls in love with her. He wants desperately to marry her but unfortunately the law states she can only marry a prince. At the same time, Jafar, the Sultan's royal advisor, is planning to retrieve a magic lamp from the "Cave of Wonders." His magic crystal tells him that only Aladdin will be able to retrieve this lamp, because Aladdin is "a diamond in the rough." Jafar recruits Aladdin and takes him to the cave. Once inside, Aladdin retrieves the lamp and is about to give it to Jafar when his monkey, Abu, steals a jewel. The walls begin to cave in and Aladdin is left with Abu, Carpet, a flying carpet, and the lamp. He soon discovers that there is a genie in the lamp, and that this genie will grant him three wishes. After cunning his way out of the cave, Aladdin wishes to be made a prince so that he can marry his love. Princess Jasmine, however, recognizes Aladdin from the market place. She asks him whether or not he really is a prince, and Aladdin lies to her. He tells Genie, who in turn gives love advice to Aladdin. Jafar learns that Aladdin has escaped the cave and is parading as a Prince in the streets of

Agrabah.* He captures Aladdin and throws him into the ocean. Luckily, Aladdin had the lamp stored in his turban and when he hits the bottom of the ocean, Genie is released. Genie makes Aladdin wish to be saved, and gets him out of the ocean. When Aladdin returns to the palace, Jafar steals the lamp and uses his wishes for evil purposes. He also banishes Aladdin to Antarctica. Somehow, Aladdin manages to return, defeat Jafar, save the princess, and free Genie.

There are more allusions to foreign policy in this film than the simple setting and ethnicity of the characters. After Aladdin lies to Jasmine, he feels guilty. He starts to discuss his situation with Genie. Genie transforms himself into several different characters, including a Frenchman. In the scene he is sitting at a small table, with a bottle of wine. He, Abu, and Carpet are wearing berets. Genie, with his pencil moustache, striped shirt, poor posture and cigarette in hand embodies the Bohemian Parisian artist. He gives Aladdin, in a French accent, philosophical advice on love. Consistent with the image projected in *Beauty and the Beast* that French men are flirtatious, French Genie is the one who advises Aladdin on the ways of love. Ultimately, the French Genie is helping Aladdin. This parallels France's support of the American troops during the Gulf War.

In the scene where Aladdin is drowning at the bottom of the ocean, Genie makes him wish to be saved. As soon as Aladdin's head nods down in a signal of "ok," Genie's mouth turns into a hornlike periscope and he morphs into a German U-Boot. He starts to

* Bah is a city and a municipal board in the Agra district in the state of Uttar Pradesh, India. Agra was historically Muslim, a fact which supports the parallel between *Aladdin* and the countries of the Middle East involved in the Gulf War.

speak in German, grabs Aladdin and shoots him out of the water, saving his life. Again, the underlying theme can be compared to Germany's support of the United States during the Gulf War. This tribute to foreign assistance will be revisited later.

The focus of this thesis is the representation of French and Germans in Disney films, and how it relates to contemporary foreign affairs. This comparison can be made between American politics and other countries. In particular, an examination of the setting and ethnicities in *Aladdin* provides the most obvious comparison between Disney and American foreign policy. From 1990-1991, the United States was militarily as well as politically involved in the Middle East. In 1992, Disney set their production in a Muslim country and incorporated Muslims as its main characters.

The Little Mermaid was not the last of Disney's allusions to the events of World War II. In 1994, Disney released the box office hit *The Lion King*. This is a story about a lion family in Africa. Mufassa is the king, and he has a son, Simba. Mufassa's brother, Scar, is jealous that Mufassa is king and that he has no clout among the members of the pride. As a result, he plots to have both Mufassa and Simba killed so that he can take over the pride. Scar concocts a plan to rid himself of his brother and nephew. He goes to the neighboring hyena den, and enlists the hyenas to help him execute his maniacal plan. Despite Scar's careful planning, Simba somehow survives. Scar tells Simba that his father's death was a direct result of Simba's actions, and advises Simba to leave the pride. Scar becomes ruler, and after a few years Simba returns to challenge his uncle for the throne. Simba wins and takes his place as king of Pride Rock.

This movie takes place in Africa. Despite its involvement in World War II, Africa is not generally emphasized as a part of the war. Yet, Disney animators use the

characters of the movie to refer to Germany's history once more. While Scar is concocting his plan to take the throne, he sings a song with his fellow conspirator hyenas. During this song, the hyenas swear their allegiance to Scar. In one scene, the hyenas are seen wearing Nazi uniforms and marching with the Nazi goosestep. This reference is particularly important for two reasons. First of all, it returns to the stereotype that Germans are Nazis, that they are cruel, and that they ally themselves with evil in hopes of promoting their situation. Interestingly, Scar is a lion – the only lion among the hyenas. Scar uses the hyenas, a species different than his own, to plan the extermination of his own kind. This is comparable to the fact that Hitler was dark-haired, dark-eyed, and arguably of Jewish descent, yet he promoted his allegiance with blond-haired, blue-eyed non-Jews. Scar's attack on the lions is comparable to Hitler's attack on dark-haired, dark-eyed Jews.

Following *The Lion King* was Walt Disney's *The Hunchback of Notre Dame*. This film appeared in theaters in 1996. The plot of the animated movie loosely follows the novel written by Victor Hugo in 1831. The animated reproduction of the novel is:

The tale of Quasimodo, the lonely outsider who longs to be out in the world beyond his bell tower. Defying the orders of his evil surrogate father, Minister of Justice Frollo, the frightened hunchback journeys into the streets of medieval Paris where he meets and falls in love with a beautiful gypsy girl named Esmeralda. He also befriends Phoebus, Captain of the King's guards. Although heartbroken when he discovers Phoebus and Esmeralda's love for each other, Quasimodo ultimately risks everything to bring them together. Quasimodo's selfless love overcomes both his own heartache and Frollo's obsessive hatred of Esmeralda. Along the way, Quasimodo

finds support and friendship from the cathedral's trio of comic gargoyles: Victor, Hugo, and Laverne. (Disney Archives).

Aside from being drawn from an originally French novel, *The Hunchback of Notre Dame* is filled with allusions and depictions of France. The movie is set in Paris: the streets, the sewers, and primarily the Cathedral of Notre Dame. The animators did an exquisite job of recreating Notre Dame in all of her majesty and glory. The gothic architecture the animators employ is true to the design of the cathedral. The famous north and south Rose windows are among the most critically acclaimed architectural masterpieces in Notre Dame. Appropriately, they are often featured throughout the movie.

Next, in accordance with Hugo's novel, the gypsies live in "the Court of Miracles." This court is located in the underground sewer system. Although on the surface this appears unlikely, the reality is that the underground sewer system in Paris is world famous and has, since its conception in the 13th century, been turned into a museum. Victor Hugo's story of gypsies living in these tunnels instigated myths that the gypsies would use the sewers for shelter and as means of escaping arrest.

Previously mentioned in the plot summary, Quasimodo has three gargoyle friends, Victor, Hugo, and Laverne. Obviously Victor and Hugo were named in commemoration of the author who created this story. The last Gargoyle, Laverne, was named after one of the Andrews Sisters. The depiction of the men in this film is significant. None of the characters speak with a French accent. The military men are all tall, strong, and masculine. Despite recent stereotypical depictions of men with pencil moustaches being recognizably French, none of the French people in this film have facial hair.

The next successful animation to utilize French characters was 20th Century Fox's *Anastasia*, released in 1997. Although this film is not a Disney production, it was the first animated production to rival Disney's success with animated films and to date is often mistaken as part of Disney's Masterpiece Collection.

The plot of this movie is loosely based on the biography of Anastasia Romanov, Tsar Nicholas II daughter. The story begins in Petersburg in the late 1800s. Tsar Nicholas II and his family are at a ball when Rasputin curses the entire family. They try to escape, and in the process Anastasia falls on train tracks and loses her memory. When she reappears in the movie, she's in her late teenage years and is searching to discover her identity. Her only clue is a charm she wears on a necklace that reads "Together in Paris." With only this clue as a guide, she leaves the orphanage where she grew up and goes to Petersburg. In the meantime, Anastasia's grandmother has posted an announcement offering a reward for the safe return of her granddaughter. Two con men, Dimitri and Vladimir, hold auditions in Petersburg to find an Anastasia look-alike so they can collect the reward. Unfortunately none of the girls who audition could pass for Anastasia. Then, just as they are ready to give up, Anastasia stumbles onto their path. They convince her she could be the princess Anastasia, and embark on a journey to Paris. After several unsuccessful meetings with her grandmother, the Grand Duchess, Anastasia remembers her past and the two are reunited. The night of Anastasia's ball, the evil holy man Rasputin kidnaps Anastasia and only after she defeats him is Anastasia once more reunited with her grandmother.

In 1996 Bill Clinton was reelected President of the United States. Under his term, foreign affairs between France and America were neutral, even almost friendly.

Although this movie contains more stereotypes of Russians than any other ethnicity, there is a scene where Dimitri, Anastasia, Vladimir, and his lover Sophie are shopping in Paris. The scene takes place in Place Vendôme and the four are leaving the shop “Chanel,” a French designer brand. The group breaks into song and encounters a group of French men. Each is wearing a striped shirt, a beret, has a pencil moustache, and is carrying baguettes. Also, the men are crowded around females, an image that reinforces their reputation as flirts. This image is still consistent with the depiction of French men from *Aladdin* and *Beauty and the Beast*.

In the middle of the song, a black woman wearing a banana skirt walks through the streets with a leopard on a leash. This woman is actually Josephine Baker, an American born Native-American/African-American who left the States and made her career in France. There, she was the “toast of Paris, the shocking, amazing ‘dark star’...” (Wood, 8) “It is not simply that she is half naked... It is partly that she is brown-skinned, which to the audience makes her seem exotic, tempestuous and instinctive.” (Wood, 9) She is recognizable in this film because of her famous banana skirt. During one of her performances, she went on stage wearing nothing but sandals, jewelry and a skirt made out of golden bananas. During this performance, her pet leopard sat backstage. In this movie, French women are portrayed positively as stylish, slender and posh.

Anastasia marked the last major animation to contain references to French culture before the War in Iraq. Disney projected the following general image of the French to children nationwide: the men are skinny unless they are cooks, then they are chubby; they have pencil moustaches, wear berets, hold baguettes, smoke, drink wine and fraternize with women. The women are attractive, flirty, and stylish.

In 1998, Germany held elections for Chancellor; running for office were both Helmut Kohl, the incumbent Chancellor and Germany's first leader since the reunification of Germany in 1989, and his opponent Gerhard Schröder. This was also the year that Disney released its next animated feature, *A Bug's Life*. This movie is about an ant, Flick who is inventive and wants to make a difference, yet always manages to bungle things. The ant farm, of which Flick is a member, lives in fear of the Grasshoppers and in an attempt to appease them spends a majority of its summer collecting a food supply for them. The day the Grasshoppers come to collect the food, Flick accidentally knocks all of it into a lake. The Grasshoppers are angered and tell the ants that they have until the end of fall to collect double the food amount they had initially collected, or else the Grasshoppers will kill the Queen. Flick is determined to help his fellow ants on the farm and takes off to find help. He stumbles upon a group of circus bugs who fail at entertainment. Because of a misunderstanding, Flick takes these circus critters to be warriors and brings them back to the farm in order to help fend off the Grasshoppers. With a lot of teamwork, the circus insects and Flick manage to overcome many obstacles and save the Queen from being squashed by the head Grasshopper. In the end Flick is able to contribute to his society in a way that matches his personality.

At the time that this movie was produced, Germany was entering elections. The two candidates were Helmut Kohl and Gerhard Schröder. During this time, Kohl was collaborating with France on the establishment of the Euro, a currency that would unite Europe. The U.S. believed that the purpose behind Kohl's integrated Europe "is mainly a competitive response by the EC (European Committee) and its member countries to global economic developments and forces. This political economy thesis is in broad

accord with popular American perceptions....which emphasize the role of a unified Europe as a powerful economic competitor of the United States in an emerging tripolar world” (Baun 605-606). In layman’s terms, the United States viewed this as Kohl’s way to contest U.S. power.

Helmut Kohl’s “thick Rhineland accent and the bumbling delivery of his speeches led most of his political enemies and even many of his friends to believe that he was a provincial light-weight” (BBC News, 1998). One of the main characters in this cartoon is Heimlich, a caterpillar. His name not only starts with an “H” like Helmut, but also contains many of the same sound patterns. Also, Heimlich is overweight much like Kohl was. Most importantly, Heimlich is inarticulate and has an exaggerated German accent. This portrayal is quite unusual compared to the typical bully stereotype of Germans in previous films. This stems from the First World War (and earlier); during that time, Germany was divided between Northern Germany and Southern Germany. Northern Germany was considered Prussian. It is from Northern Germany that the angular, tall, blonde-haired, blue-eyed evil stereotype originates. The other stereotype that emerged from the era was that of the burly, ever-hungry, chubby, non-threatening, Bavarian Southern German. Clinton’s close relationship with Kohl could be an explanation as to why Heimlich is portrayed as a friendly creature. Simultaneously, Kohl was the leader in unifying Europe. Europe’s fiscal union was a potential threat to the value of the US Dollar. This harmless characterization could be a taunt that the US is not afraid of Euro.

Two years later, after Kohl lost the election, the Euro was ratified and circulated as European currency. Unlike the US feared, however, the Euro was not an immediate success for the European Union. “The Euro was introduced in January 1999 at the value

of \$1.17... but defying almost all predictions, it declined almost continuously reaching a near parity to the dollar at the end of 1999 then falling to a low of \$.82 on October 26, 2000.” (Salvatore, 162) That year, Disney’s *The Emperor’s New Groove* came to theaters. The characters in the film all spoke English with no accent. Not many references were made to France or Germany. However, right in the middle of the movie, Pacha (one of the main characters) uses some German. He is in the forest, and the evil villainess is trying to communicate with a squirrel. Unfortunately, she doesn’t speak squirrel, and the squirrel doesn’t speak human, so Pacha has to interpret. The conversation between the squirrel and the villainess isn’t a friendly one, and Pacha says, “Ugh... Ich bin in the middle...” That is the only reference to German in the whole movie. This quote is a reference to John F. Kennedy’s speech in Berlin, where he mistakenly said he was a donut rather than a Berliner. Kennedy gave his speech during the Cold War. In this film, Pacha says he’s in the middle between a squirrel and the villainess. Similarly, the United States was in the middle between West and East Berlin during that time. On a smaller note, the U.S. considered Germany to be in the middle of the Euro crisis. “Would Germany accept a growth rate much lower than France’s, year in and year out, if that is what would result from a common monetary policy without Germany’s being able to provide much fiscal stimulus (because of the budget restrictions imposed by the Maastricht Treaty) or other strategic help to some industries deemed important for growth?” (Salvatore, 161)

In 2000, George W. Bush won the presidential election in the United States. The complications with the elections were publicized world-wide. The French and Germans were disappointed by the election results. I remember being there and all the news

headlines read things like, “Bush Stole the Election,” or “Bush Cheats to Win.” This negative portrayal of Americans in France and Germany did not go unnoticed. In 2001, Disney released *Atlantis*. In this film, both French and German influences are apparent, although the French ones by far surpassing the German ones. To begin with, there are both a French and a German character. The German one is a villainess named Helga. She is not readily identifiable as German, however. She does not speak with a German accent, nor does she walk with the Nazi goosestep. However, she has very angular features, blonde hair, blue eyes, and she is a villainess.

The French are clearly more targeted. In the film, one of the crew members is a weird little man they call “Mole.” As you learn before the adventure begins, Mole’s real name is Molière. Molière was a famous French author who was well known for his wit and comedy. Here, Mole is a short, creepy little man. He speaks with a French accent, and he has a pencil moustache. His character is really not one to be admired. All the other characters in the movie think him crazy and are uneasy around him. He is obsessed with dirt and, true to a mole, loves to dig holes in the dirt. Although in the end, Mole turns out to be a protagonist, his character is really not a positive one at all. This more negative portrayal of the French and Germans in this film is consistent with the anti-Bush sentiment that Germany and France were feeling at this time. This film, however, was not a success at the box office.

A few months later, American foreign policy changed drastically. On September 11, 2001 America suffered the greatest attack in history on U.S. soil when terrorists flew planes into the Twin Towers and the Pentagon. Immediately following the attacks on the Twin Towers, people all over the world rallied behind the United States in support. As

Levy-Willard explains in her article, "... ultimately the scope of the World Trade Center drama was enough to repress the old tradition of Anti-Americanism. For once people from all over Europe, and in France especially, demonstrated solidarity with America... President Jacques Chirac, a conservative, as well as the Socialist Government under Prime Minister Lionel Jospin—like all the governments in Europe—were standing firmly by America's side, faithful allies of the Bush Administration, to help fight terrorism." (Levy-Willard, 74-75)

This collaboration between France and America is comparable to images in Walt Disney's 2001, release *Monsters, Inc.* Although brief, the reference to France is a positive one. The film is about monsters that live off of the shrieks and screams of little children. The main characters work at a scream factory. Their daily responsibilities include pulling closet doors out of storage and plugging them into a contraption that allows the monsters access to children's rooms. One day, one of the monsters accidentally lets a child into the monster world. The two main characters embark on a journey to try to return the little girl to her room unharmed. In one of the final scenes, the two monsters and the little girl are being chased by an evil monster who wants to exterminate the little girl. The scene continues with the three monsters going in and out of different doors, the protagonists trying to find the one that leads back to the little girl's room and the antagonist trying to capture the little girl. During this door chase, the two protagonists open a door and stumble into a French room. The décor is very French – large windows, hardwood floors, and through the windows a clear view of the Eiffel Tower. There are no humans present in the scene, but there is a poster that reads "Tour

de France.” The room is immaculate. From this brief encounter with French culture, viewers can conclude that the French are clean and neat, and have beautiful monuments.

That same year, DreamWorks released its first major animated box-office-success, *Shrek*. Again, the amount of success this movie had compares to the success a Disney film has, and therefore is often mistaken to have been produced by Disney. *Shrek* is the story of an ogre who lives in a swamp that has been taken over by the local ruler. He meets a talking donkey and the two of them take off to tell the ruler they want Shrek’s land back. While there, the ruler, Lord Farquaad, makes a deal with Shrek: Shrek must go save Princess Fiona (Lord Farquaad’s bride-to-be) from a dragon-patrolled castle. In return, Lord Farquaad will return Shrek’s land. During the journey, Shrek and Princess Fiona fall in love; after defeating Lord Farquaad, Princess Fiona turns into an ogre, and we can infer that she will marry Shrek. The creators of this film incorporated references to other movies as well as jokes that were targeted towards adults. The result was a successful film for viewers of all ages.

Surprisingly consistent with the optimistic state of foreign affairs between Europe and America, this film contains allusions to France and Germany. The primary example of German reference is the name of the ogre, Shrek. In the movie, Shrek is sad because he claims that the nature of his being is grounds for misjudgment. He wishes that people would disregard the stereotype that ogres are mean, man-eating monsters, and realize that he is actually a kind and gentle ogre. The word “Schreck” means “fright” in German and after the Second World War, Germans were stereotypically portrayed as mean, evil Nazis despite their peaceful history since World War II. Similarly, Shrek with his German name complains about being misjudged as ferocious just because his ancestors were. In

addition, during the opening scenes of the movie, Shrek encounters all the characters from every well-known fairy tale. Among these characters are the Three Little Pigs. These three pigs speak with a German accent, and paradoxically, in Germany pigs are simultaneously considered the symbol of luck, as well as deemed the greatest insult. Also, consistent with the Bavarian stereotype of large overeaters, pigs are often referred to as animals that overeat.

Unfortunately, many French citizens responded negatively to the 9/11 Attacks. As Levy-Willard, a journalist for the French journal *Liberation* writes: “To our embarrassment, some people were calling Libération [a French journal] with joy: ‘*Good for them! The Americans deserve it!*’ some of our so-called readers were screaming into their phones...” (Levy-Willard, 73) Arguably in response to the French public’s negative reaction to the 9/11 attacks, the French references are less flattering than they had been in the past. While journeying back to Lord Farquaad’s castle, Shrek and Princess Fiona encounter Robin Hood. Keeping with the image that France is “a bunch of cheese-eating surrender monkeys,” (The Simpsons, 1995) Robin Hood is depicted as weak and flamboyant. However, his masculinity isn’t challenged. In an attempt to woo Princess Fiona, he flatters her and gives her chivalrous kisses on her hand. Unlike in the past when French men were depicted as successful lovers, in this representation Princess Fiona is revolted by Robin Hood. The last allusion to France appears through the Friar, who plays the accordion, an instrument stereotypically associated as a French instrument.

This return to anti-Americanism did not go unnoticed in America. Anti-French sentiment was on the rise. “This sympathy faded when America struck Afghanistan. We saw, in the editorial pages of our newspaper, a renewed outpouring of typical anti-

American clichés: ‘*American Imperialism*,’ ‘*arrogance*,’ ‘*Bush-the-Texan*’ (a metaphor for ‘*stupid cowboy*’), ‘*idiot puritans*,’ ‘*hegemony*,’ etc” (Levy-Willard, 74).

Coincidentally, in 2003 Disney, in conjunction with Pixar, released its next box office hit *Finding Nemo*. The plot of the movie centers around three fish, Nemo, Marlin, and Dory. Nemo is captured and transferred to a fish tank in Australia. His father, Marlin and his father’s friend Dory cross the entire ocean in search of Nemo. Meanwhile, Nemo along with his companion friends from the fish tank plot an escape. Their idea is to break the filter so that the owner of the tank has to clean the fish tank manually. Then, while the fish are all in holding bags, they will roll out the window, cross the street, and roll into the ocean. Ultimately, all the creatures in the ocean band together to help reunite Nemo with his father.

Here we see again a correlation between the state of affairs between France and America and how the French are represented in Disney. Among the other fish in the tank in which Nemo is held captive, there is a Pacific cleaner shrimp named Jacques. The very nature of his character employs traditional stereotyping. Because he is a shrimp he has two long feelers that protrude from the upper lip area. These feelers make allusion to the stereotypical pencil mustaches French men wear. He also speaks with a French accent. The parallel to the negative sentiments towards the French lies in Jacques’s position within the tank. Other fish swim and are obsessively clean. Jacques is the dirt-eating cleaner. Although never explicitly stated, he, a representative of the French, is a “scum-sucker.”

“With no such evidence [that Iraq possessed Weapons of Mass Destruction] , with UNMOVIC and IAEA inspectors operating without any restrictions in Iraq, and with

Iraq professing its willingness to cooperate in resolving any alleged discrepancies in its declaration, support by other governments for the resort to armed forces against Iraq weakened. France declared that full and effective disarmament of Iraq by peaceful means through the use of inspectors, but would oppose military action against Iraq and would veto any Security Council resolution authorizing such force. [sic] Within days, Germany joined France in opposing the resort to war prior to exhausting all efforts at inspections.” (American Journal of International Law, 421)

This was in 2003.

Although both France and Germany refused to support the Bush Administration in its endeavor of military force in Iraq, America’s reaction to both countries’ reaction was radically different. France’s refusal to back the United States in their invasion of Iraq in 2003 had disastrous effects for anti-French sentiment. In addition to the return of the popular phrase that the French are nothing but a bunch of “cheese-eating surrender monkeys” (The Simpsons, 1995), in March of 2003 three of the House office buildings made a change to their menus. “The cafeteria menus in the three House office buildings changed the name of ‘French fries’ to ‘freedom fries’” in a culinary rebuke of France stemming from anger over the country’s refusal to support the U.S. position on Iraq. Ditto for ‘French toast,’ which will be known as ‘freedom toast.’” (CNN, 3/12/03) This anti-French movement was started by two Republican members of Capitol Hill, but spread throughout the United States. “This action today is a small, but symbolic effort to show the strong displeasure of many on Capitol Hill with the actions of our so-called ally, France,” said Rep. Bob Ney, a leader in the name change and the chairman of the Committee on House Administration (CNN, 3/12/03). “... There is no doubt that in 2003

France joined the ranks of countries subjected to a campaign of widespread bashing from the American population.” (Vaisse, 2003)

A year later, in 2003, Disney’s production of *The Incredibles* hit theaters all over America. The plot of this animated film involves a family of ex-super heroes. The opening scene of the movie is perhaps the most blatant attack on the French ever to be portrayed in a Disney film.

“After a brief scene depicting an interview with three superheroes (Mr. Incredible/Bob Parr, Elastigirl/Helen, and Frozone/Lucius), the film opens with a youthful Mr. Incredible capturing two criminals while saving a kitten from a tree. He then meets Buddy Pine, his self-proclaimed “number one fan,” who wants to be his sidekick, Incredi-Boy. Mr. Incredible rejects his offer and then, along with Elastigirl, captures a thief. After saving a man from falling to his death, Mr. Incredible finds Bomb Voyage in the act of robbing a bank...” (Wikipedia).

Whereas in prior films villains had never been cast with a French accent, in *The Incredibles* the villain, Bomb Voyage, had a foreign accent. His name is a play on words for the French expression “Bon Voyage” meaning “have a nice trip.” This phrase can also be said sarcastically to mean “Good riddance.” As a sign of the proliferation of Francophobia, this villain has a French accent. When he enters the scene, accordion music can be heard in the background. In addition, he wears a beret, a striped shirt, and has a pencil moustache. Furthermore, to commemorate the “surrender” aspect of the *The Simpsons*’ catch phrase, Bomb Voyage is the only super hero who has no super power. Others in the film have natural speed, strength, freezing capabilities, invisibility, and other super powers. Bomb Voyage, on the other

hand, is just a mean French man who uses bombs to cause damage. This last point is the most significant. Only a few years after the bombing of the Twin Towers, French men are represented as terrorist bombers. This is a direct parallel to the disintegrated relationship between France and America at this time.

In 2004, DreamWorks released *Shrek II*. The movie was as great a success as the first, and contained just as many references to the French, as well as additional references to Germans as did the first. In this movie, Shrek and Princess Fiona go to visit the King and Queen (Princess Fiona's parents) in the Kingdom of Far Far Away. When they arrive, the King is appalled that his daughter has married an ogre. In the course of the film we learn that the King had originally been a toad, and the fairy Godmother turned him into a human in exchange for a promise that Princess Fiona would marry her son, Prince Charming. For that reason, the King fears the fairy Godmother will be furious when she finds out about Fiona's marriage to an ogre. The first night at dinner, the King and Shrek have a fierce argument, which then carries over between Shrek and Fiona. The argument ends with Fiona's feelings being hurt. During Shrek's and Fiona's argument, the Fairy Godmother comes and threatens the King. She tells him to get rid of Shrek so that Fiona can marry the fairy's son, Prince Charming. As a result of Fairy Godmother's threat, the King tries to have Shrek killed. He hires the most vicious hit man in the kingdom, a cat named Puss in Boots. Fortunately, the cat proves to be no match for Shrek and he joins Shrek and Donkey as part of the group. Shrek decides that in order to please Fiona, he is going to drink some "Happily Ever After" potion. After consumption, Shrek turns into an attractive male. He returns to the King's and Queen's castle to find that Fairy God Mother has told Fiona that Prince Charming was in fact Shrek. She also locks Shrek in a room and tells him that, if he truly loves Fiona, he should let her marry Prince Charming. After he leaves, he overhears Fairy

Godmother and the King talking. He learns that the Fairy Godmother is blackmailing the King into forcing Fiona to marry Prince Charming. As Shrek races back to the castle to stop the marriage, he is captured by Fairy Godmother and her henchmen. Luckily for Shrek, his fairytale friends are watching the news at the time of his arrest, and they come to his rescue. The Three Little Pigs play an instrumental role in his release. Although the other fairytale members assist in the rescue, they are portrayed as bumbling and clumsy, whereas the Pigs succeed in their endeavors. Ultimately, after a cell break and a battle with the Fairy Godmother, Shrek saves Fiona from Prince Charming. He gives Princess Fiona the option of kissing him before midnight so the two can remain human, however she says she loves the ogre she married and they allow the spell to wear off before living happily ever after.

Like the first film, *Shrek II* combined stereotypes of French and Germans, only this time the stereotypes can be linked to sentiments from post 9/11 and War in Iraq. Contrary to the masculine portrayal of Robin Hood in the first *Shrek*, this time French men are represented as feminine. While the stereotype that good cooks are French seems to traverse the decades, the image of these cooks changes. In *The Little Mermaid*, the chef was tubby and had a pencil moustache. He wore a white apron and a white chef hat. Through his mannerisms and voice inflection, his masculinity is understood. In *Shrek II*, however, the cooks are all very thin and their mannerisms, voice inflection, and body language when they deliver the food suggest stereotypical homosexuality.

Furthermore, in the scene when Shrek arrives at the Fairy Godmother's factory, he is greeted by an elf. This elf is wearing all purple, and speaks with a French accent. He also has a pencil mustache and is easily confused. This suggests that stereotypes for French men changed from masculine to suggestively homosexual. In the scene

immediately following when Shrek steals the magic potion, Fairy God Mother is in her factory and notices that a vat of potion has spilled, transforming all the workers into doves. One dove approaches to give her an inventory report, and it has a French accent. Again, this dove is wearing a purple hat, whereas no other doves carry any distinction. Although purple used to signify royalty, it has now become a symbol of homosexuality.

Unlike in *Shrek* from 2001, the Three Little Pigs have a greater function in this film. The interesting aspect of their role is that there are multiple interpretations of what their purpose could symbolize. One interpretation goes back to Germany's history with both the pig as well as the Second World War. To begin with, the pig has the aforementioned importance that it represents both the symbol of luck as well as an insult.

Furthermore, the fact that the animators chose the Three Little Pigs to have German accents is curious. There is a strong parallel between Three Little Pigs in this movie and the fact that there were three major countries allied together as the Axis Powers during World War II. In the movie *Shrek II*, the Three Little Pigs are instrumental in helping Shrek escape his imprisonment, and as stated earlier are arguably the only ones capable of executing a plan. This is comparable to Germany being the leader of the Axis Powers. This is also, interestingly enough, comparable to George Orwell's *Animal Farm*. In the novella, a group of farm animals evict their human rulers. Initially, the animals set up a Communist system. Unfortunately, after using propaganda to convince the other animals that they are the superior brains, the pigs take over and are tyrannous rulers. This novella was written during the Second World War and although it was targeted at Stalinism, it is comparable to an allegory of what was happening in

Germany during that time. Although the Three Little Pigs never develop into tyrannical rulers, they are, in this film, established as the smarter animal of the group.

The other interpretation is perhaps more reasonable. Shortly after the Terrorist Attacks on the Twin Towers, Germany united with America to assist with the security. Germany contributed military planes which it had patrol American skies. Also, many of the suspects in planning the terrorist attacks on the Twin Towers were tried in Germany. This demonstration of solidarity was much appreciated by the United States.

Coincidentally, in *Shrek II*, the German pigs come to Shrek's rescue. Some could argue that the correlation between the German military assistance and the Three Little Pigs' assistance is weakened by the fact that Shrek speaks in a Scottish accent. Although this is true, at the time of production Chris Farley was the original voice cast for the part. Unfortunately, he passed away prior to the completion of his voice recording. As a result, Mike Myers was given the role as Shrek. Again, the voice was originally recorded in an American accent, but prior to the movie's release, Mike Myers asked to re-record the voice and use a Scottish accent. Therefore, the argument still stands that as the screenplay was originally written, the German Pigs would have been coming to the rescue of an American ogre. (Disney Archives)

This thesis is an analysis of the correlation between American foreign policy towards France and Germany and how that translates into representation of French and Germans through animated films. A criticism of the arguments from the period of 9/11 through to present day is that Germany, like France, also declined participation in the invasion of Iraq. Why then weren't the Germans depicted as terrorist bombers in Disney's movies? As is clear from newspapers, television, and cinema, American

sentiments towards the French took a turn for the worse following 9/11 and subsequently the War in Iraq. Television shows, such as *Family Guy*, *The Simpsons*, and talk shows like *Jay Leno*, *Conan O'Brien*, and *David Letterman* all ridiculed the French for their lack of participation in the War on Terror, claiming that it was because they were “too scared,” “cowardly”, and because they are “tired of surrendering.” The traditional anti-French sentiment was exacerbated in 2003. The image of Germans, however, was not tainted. Although reasons for this disparity between portrayals remain vague, a possible explanation is the reason for which Americans feel France didn’t join the effort in Iraq. According to sources, Americans felt that France’s refusal to side with the US was not based on moral objection, but rather for selfish financial reasons. “Saddam uses oil money not only to buy the loyalty of his security forces and ruling inner circle, but also to purchase support of members of the U.N. Security Council. Iraq awards the bulk of its lucrative oil-for-food contracts to countries—such as France, Russia and China—that are pressing for the lifting of sanctions.” (Strauss, 19) CNN gave another possible explanation: “Asked why he was focusing on France when other nations, including Germany and Russia, oppose the U.S. position on Iraq, Jones said it was because France had taken the lead in challenging the United States.” (CNN, 3/12/03) Because Germany had no apparent vested interest in not supporting the war, it was not targeted the way France was.

By 2005, American approval for the War in Iraq had dropped drastically. When a *North Carolina News and Observer* asked Mr. Jones [the instigator of “Freedom Fries”] about the name change campaign – “...An idea Mr. Jones said at the time came to him by a combination of God's hand and a constituent's request - he replied: ‘I wish it had

never happened.” (Wilson, 5/25/05) Former supporters and Allies began to speak out. America had entered into an uncomfortable relationship with its former Allies France and Germany. Simultaneously, Disney released its next blockbuster hit *Madagascar*, in 2005. Contrary to prior films of the 21st century, this film contained hardly any references to either France or Germany. The movie is about a group of zoo animals from Manhattan. The zebra has a birthday, and when he blows out the candles he wishes that he could go to the wild. Through a series of unfortunate events, all the animals end up in crates and are being shipped back to Africa. During the voyage, however, the Penguins escape and commandeer the ship; they prefer Antarctica to Africa. During the struggle between Penguins and humans, the crates containing the remaining zoo animals get knocked into the ocean, and the group finds itself stranded on an island. There they learn the true meaning of friendship, and at the very end the Penguins return to save the animals.

In the beginning of the movie, the Penguins are trying to dig a tunnel from their exhibit to Antarctica. Because of a slight miscalculation, they accidentally dig a tunnel to the Zebra’s exhibit. When the Penguin pops his head out of the grass, his first question is, “Sprechen Sie Englisch?” Although arguably more a coded reference to Jewish history, these expressions can also be interpreted as German.

Although this next film is neither a Walt Disney Production, nor an animated feature film, it exemplifies one of the oldest and best known German stereotypes and for this reason will be examined. The film is *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory*, released by Warner Brothers. This classic story is a remake of the 1971 hit *Willy Wonka and the Chocolate Factory*. In this film, five children win the right to visit a famous candy

factory. They include Charlie Bucket, Veruca Salt, Violet Beauregarde, Mike Teavee, and Augustus Gloop. All these children speak with an American accent, except for Augustus Gloop. He speaks with a German accent. He also is very overweight and loves to eat. This is a reference to the other stereotype of Bavarian-Germans as being all chubby, non-threatening, and wearing Lederhosen. Although in this film Augustus is not wearing Lederhosen, he is wearing three quarter length jeans which resemble Lederhosen and are not common among young boys his age. Furthermore, his stereotypically blond hair is styled in the same fashion as young boys used have their hair back in the 1970's when the film was originally created.

In 2003, when the US invaded Iraq, the country responded by banding together and exhibiting patriotism. Very many houses had a flag in the window, cars had "Support Our Troops" magnets attached to their bumpers, women wore American Flag pins etc. This flood of patriotism and support for our country and government can be linked to Disney. In 2003, in addition to *Finding Nemo*, Walt Disney Productions expressed its patriotism through its latest animated box office film, *Brother Bear*. The story is of a young man in a Native American tribe. He is about to receive his Totem, the symbol of his spirit, and expects to be something brave and ferocious. Instead, he is given the totem of Love in the form of a bear. One day after fishing, a young man neglects to attach the basket in the trees to prevent bears from eating his catch. When he returns, the fish are missing. Angered, he sets off to kill the bear. He is not able to, and his two brothers come to his rescue. Unfortunately, his oldest brother doesn't survive the fight. Angered even more, the young man sets out to avenge his brother and kill the bear that caused his death. The young man kills the bear, and his deceased brother appears to

him and transforms him into a bear. With this new physique, the young man sets off to find “Where the lights touch the mountain,” as that is where he will be returned to his human shape. During his journey, he meets a little bear cub who has been separated from his mother. The young man and the baby bear develop a strong relationship to each other. Near the end, the young man learns that the bear he killed to avenge his brother was in fact the baby bear’s mother. He realizes he was too quick to judge the meaning of his Totem. Finally, he reaches the lights, but after being turned back into a human, he realizes how much the bear cub needs him as a role model. So he asks to be turned back into a bear so he can live with the cub.

This movie is the first successful animated Disney movie to be set in the United States after World War II. It contains absolutely no references to France or Germany. None of the characters speak with a European accent. There is one bear who sounds Russian, and there are two moose that employ the term “eh” to reference Canada. The human characters are Native Americans. The lack of European influence suggests that this film is a reminder to the American people that the United States has its own roots, and they aren’t in any European country.

The next year, in 2004, *Home on the Range* came to theaters. This was also a Disney production. Again, this movie was set in the United States. None of the characters used foreign accents. The only accents employed were those of the South and the West. The plot is a story of a farm of animals that are going to lose their land unless the farmer can pay her taxes. The cows embark on a mission to capture a cattle thief who has been roaming the Wild West. After a lot of tries, they finally manage to do so and save their farm. Aside from the fact that the setting is in the United States, not only for

the second time in a row, but also for the second time in Disney history, the plot is unimportant. The key concepts to retain from this movie are again, that the animators created a story that was set in the US, the characters employed no foreign accents, and that there were zero allusions to France or Germany.

In 2005, Disney's next movie came out, *Chicken Little*. Again, this film is set in the United States. This was the third consecutive Disney production that took place in the US. Coincidentally, this was also the third consecutive movie in which none of the characters, principal or minor, had a European accent, and the third consecutive film to contain zero references to France or Germany. Finally, in 2006, Disney released its two most recent animated feature films, *Over the Hedge* and *Cars*. Like the previous movies, *Over the Hedge* is based in American suburbia.

Although there are a multitude of main characters, none of them use a distinct French or German accent. The Prussian cat, however, at times seems to perhaps have a hint of an accent – one that appears to be a mix between French and Hispanic. More important than the accent is the correlation between the cat, Tiger, and the skunk, Stella, in this film. In the old *Pepe le Pew* cartoons, Pepe was French, a skunk, and a womanizer. In these cartoons, a black cat would, for example, get a white stripe painted down her back and Pepe would mistake her for a skunk. He would spend the entire cartoon trying to seduce the cat until the end when he realizes that she is in fact a cat and not a skunk. In this film, the reverse happens. Tiger is a cat, not a skunk. Stella, a skunk, tries to transform herself to look like a cat in order to seduce the cat. It works, and the two develop a romantic relationship. Unlike in the older cartoons, however, when Tiger learns that Stella is a skunk and not a cat, he does not forfeit his

romantic advances. Rather, the two remain a pair through the film. The outrageous romanticism Tiger portrays is no doubt a reference to the old cartoon.

The movie *Cars* also takes place in the United States, along Route 66. The main characters are cars and trucks, all who speak and interact like people. One of the main characters is the Porsche. She is a blue car, and naturally German. However, she never speaks with the German accent, nor does she—or anyone else for that matter—mention any element of German history or culture.

Of course, stereotyping and representation of French and Germans is not limited to children's movies. Viewers will encounter it on television in the form of talk shows, cartoons, sitcoms, and commercials. Movies intended for a more mature audience than little children, also have references to German and French culture, although they tend not to be as discrete as they are in Disney movies and other animated feature films.

For example, the popular animated TV show *Family Guy* is relentless about its blatant attacks on French and Germans. In the first episode of the first season, Meg, the daughter, announces to her parents that she wants collagen injections in her lips because they aren't beautiful enough. Lois, her mother and one of the staple characters, tells Meg that she should like herself the way she is. Lois then tells her that bad things have happened because of insecurities regarding self image. The scene changes and the viewers see Hitler in a gym. The viewers can identify him as Hitler because of his toothbrush moustache, dark hair and dark eyes. He is scrawny, pale, and alone. The image pans out to the other side of the gym, and from Hitler's point of view we see a large, buff, attractive Jew surrounded by females. He is identified as a Jew because he has long peyos and a large nose. Also, he has dark hair and dark eyes. Although there is

humor in the idea that Hitler waged the Holocaust because of his insecurities, the depiction is very blunt. In another episode, Peter Griffin, Lois's husband and Meg's father, becomes obsessed with television. He neglects his duties as a father in order to watch his favorite shows. Lois gets upset and mandates that Peter take Meg out to drive. After a brief lesson, Peter is driving them both home when he gets distracted watching a TV show through someone's window, and accidentally takes out the satellite dish that airs the city's cable. Devastated, Peter has to learn how to survive without television. He decides to live every day to its fullest and starts to attend local activities. One such activity is the "German Festival." For the special occasion, Peter dresses up in a white T-shirt tucked into a pair of Lederhosen with suspenders, and a Bavarian hat with a plume. This is again a standard stereotype of Germans. Once he arrives at the festival, the camera shows a series of booths. The one on the far left is the German booth, selling Brats. Next to the German booth is the Polish booth selling sausages. The German vendor, who has a toothbrush moustache, clubs the Pole on the head with a Brat and takes over his booth. Then, he does the same with the neighboring booth, and the scene insinuates that this invasion of booths will continue. Here we have once more a very blunt and overt reference to German history.

In yet another episode, Peter goes into a party place to schedule a birthday party for his son. He accidentally spends the entirety of the deposit check his wife gave him on tokens. When he returns home with no reservation for his son's birthday, he tells Lois that the place looked too sinister and the managers didn't treat him well. The image fades into the description Peter is giving Lois of the place. We see Peter walk through the dungeon-like doors, and the manager (who has a toothbrush moustache) raises his

arm to Peter and shouts “Heil Hitler!” The analogies to Nazi Germany are present in almost every episode of this television program.

Germany, however, isn’t the only country to be criticized on commercial television. Recent commercials have cast French people in a very negative light. One such example is the “Angel Soft” bath tissue commercial. In this commercial, a man is standing in front of a toilet, and is noticing the roll of paper is out. Then, in comes a younger, more feminine man wearing a beret. He says, “Zut alors!” and replenishes the bath tissue roll. The American asks him why he is talking with a French accent, and he responds that he has just returned from a French lesson. After his work is done in that particular bathroom, the scene changes and the American and Frenchman are seen walking down a corridor. The American asks a question to which the Frenchman answers, “Oui oui!” The American then does a play on words and says in a pejorative tone, “wee-wee.”

Another striking commercial which is a blatant depiction of French men’s sexuality airs on the Food Channel. The commercial consists of a camp portrayal of a man figure skating with a giant lobster. The announcer narrates the figure skater’s actions and the viewer understands that this is a pairs competition. Near the end, the French man drops the lobster and it breaks. This underlying meaning of this commercial is two fold. The first is that Frenchmen are effeminate. The second is that the French have always been renowned for their culinary skills. Now, however, they can’t even do that right.

There is one more commercial that provides a most appalling attack on the French. In it, two Americans are having difficulties with their toilet, which backed up.

After several attempts, the drain unclogs and the toilet flushes. The picture cuts to a French couple having dinner. In the middle of their meal, the fecal matter from the American drain lands on their table. The scene cuts back to the Americans. They look at each other as if they're wondering, "Where did that go?" and then shrug as if to say "who cares!" The message implied in this commercial is that France is so awful, it is appropriate for Americans to defecate on them.

The examination of animated films since World War II has revealed a surprising link to the state of foreign affairs between America and its two biggest European allies. It appears that immediately following the Second World War, Disney's representation of France and Germany was more on a historical level than on a personal one. In recent years, however, this has changed to include details about the French and Germans as people rather than as a country. This shift in emphasis seems to parallel the events in history. World War II was an attack by a country on other countries"(with the Holocaust constituting a horrific exception); these attacks were representative of the political leaders of those countries and their beliefs. Now that World War II is no longer a recent memory for the general public in America, allusions to it are less common. In response, Disney movies following World War II but preceding September 11th focused the references to the European countries on a political level, rather than a personal one. Presently, the United States is involved in a war on terrorists. Unlike war in the 20th century, terrorism utilizes individuals to attack rather than troops, and these individuals do not necessarily represent the views and ideals of their country's political leaders. Similarly, the focus of representation in Disney films since September 11th has shifted to stereotyping and representation of individuals rather than just politics.

In conclusion, my research supports the claim that there is in fact a strong correlation between American foreign policy towards France and Germany and the representation of French and Germans in animated box office hits since 1945, which include primarily Disney feature animations as well as a few DreamWorks animations. The objective of this research was to make this argument and support it. Although it is possible that the conclusions drawn from this research do not represent Disney's intent at the onset of each film, there seems to be substantial evidence that establishes a pattern between representation and foreign affairs.

Works Cited

- Aladdin*. Dir. Ron Clements, John Musker. With Scott Weinger, Robin Williams, Linda Larkin, Jonathan Freeman, Frank Welker, Gilbert Gottfried, Douglas Seale, Jim Cummings, Russi Taylor. Buena Vista Distributions, 1992.
- Anastasia*. Dir. Don Bluth, Gary Goldman. With Meg Ryan, John Cusack, Kelsey Grammer. 20th Century Fox, 1997.
- The Aristocats*. Dir. Wolfgang Reitherman. With Phil Harris, Eva Gabor, Liz English, Gary Dubin, Dean Clark, Scatman Crothers. Buena Vista Distribution, 1970.
- Baun, Michael J. "The Maastricht Treaty as High Politics: Germany, France, and European Integration" *Political Science Quarterly* Winter 1995-1996, Vol. 110. No. 4, 605-624
- BBC News. "German Election" *Special Reports*. 28 September, 1998
- Beauty and the Beast*. Dir. Gary Trousdale, Kirk Wise. With Paige O'Hara, Robby Benson, Richard Dille, Jerry Orbach, Angela Lansbury, David Ogden Stiers, Bradley Pierce, Jesse Corti, Rex Everhart. Buena Vista Distributions, 1991.
- Brother Bear*. Dir. Aaron Blaise, Robert Walker. With Joaquin Phoenix, Jeremy Suarez, Rick Moranis, Dave Thomas, Jason Raize, D.B. Sweeney, Joan Copeland, Michael Clarke Duncan. Walt Disney Productions, 2003.
- A Bug's Life*. Dir. John Lasseter, Andrew Stanton (co-director). With Dave Foley, Kevin Spacey, Julia Louis-Dreyfus, Hayden Panettiere, Denis Leary, Phyllis Diller, Joe Ranft, David Hyde-Pierce, Brad Pitt, Richard Kind, Bonnie Hunt, Jonathan Harris, Madeline Kahn, Richard Kind, Michael McShane, John Ratzenberger. Walt Disney Productions, 1998.
- Cars*. Dir. John Lasseter, Joe Ranft (co-director). With Owen Wilson, Paul Newman, Bonnie Hunt, Larry the Cable Guy, Cheech Marin, Tony Shalhoub, Guido Quaroni, Jenifer Lewis, Paul Dooley, Michael Wallis, George Carlin, Katherine Helmond, John Ratzenberger, Joe Ranft, Michael Keaton, Richard Petty, Jeremy Piven, Jeremy Clarkson. Walt Disney Productions, 2006.
- Chicken Little*. Dir. Mark Dindal. With Zach Braff, Joan Cusack, Steve Zahn, Dan Molina, Garry Shandling, Season Elmore, Fred Willard, Catherine O'Hara, Amy Sedaris, Don Knotts. Walt Disney Productions, 2005.
- Cinderella*. Dir. Geronimi, Clyde., Jackson, Wilfred., Luske, Hamilton. With Ilene Woods, Eleanor Audley, Verna Felton, Claire DuBrey, Rhoda Williams, James MacDonald, Luis Van Rooten, Don Barclay. Walt Disney, 1950.

Cogan, Charles. "American-French Intelligence Relations and the French Nuclear Deterrent" *Journal of Intelligence History* Summer, 2003, 55-60

"Contemporary Practice of the United States Relating to International Law: Use of Military Force to Disarm Iraq" *The American Journal of International Law* April, 2003, Vol. 97, No. 2, 419-432

De Grauwe, Honkapohja, Seppo., Paul., Portes, Richard. and Rey, Hélène. "The Emergence of the Euro as an International Currency" *Economic Policy* April 1998, Vol. 13, No. 26, EMU, 305-343

The Emperor's New Groove. Dir. Mark Dindal. With David Spade, John Goodman, Eartha Kitt, Patrick Warburton. Walt Disney Productions, 2000.

Family Guy. Creator Seth MacFarlane, David Zuckerman, with Seth MacFarlane, Alex Borstein, Seth Green, Mila Kunis. FOX, 1999

Finding Nemo. Dir. Andrew Stanton, Lee Unkrich (co-director). With Alexander Gould, Albert Brooks, Ellen DeGeneres, Willem Dafoe, Brad Garrett, Allison Janney, Austin Pendleton, Stephen , oot, Vicki Lewis, Joe Ranft, Nicholas Bird, Andrew Stanton, Bob Peterson, Eric Bana, Bruce Spence, Elizabeth Perkins. Walt Disney Productions, 2003.

Gresh, Alain. "The Legacy of Desert Storm: A European Perspective" *Journal of Palestine Studies* Summer, 1997, Vol. 26, No. 4, 70-77

<http://www.artchive.com/artchive/T/toulouse-lautrec.html>

<http://disney.go.com/vault/archives/today.html>

<http://www.wikipedia.org>

Home on the Range. Dir. Will Finn, John Sanford. With Roseanne Barr, Judi Dench, Cuba Gooding Jr., Randy Quaid, Jennifer Tilly, Steve Buscemi. Walt Disney Productions, 2004.

The Hunchback of Notre Dame. Dir. Gary Trousdale, Kirk Wise. With Tom Hulce, Demi Moore, Tony Jay, Kevin Kline, Paul Kandel, Jason Alexander, Charles Kimbrough, Mary Wickes. Walt Disney Productions, 1996.

The Incredibles. Dir. Brad Bird. With Craig T. Nelson, Holly Hunter, Samuel L. Jackson, Jason Lee, Eli Fucile, Brad Bird, Spencer Fox, Wallace Shawn, Jean Sincere, Sarah Vowell, Bud Luckey. Pixar Animation Studios, 2004.

Kauffmann, Sylvie. "Déchirements Américains" *Le Monde* April 30, 2003

Lady and the Tramp. Dir. Geronimi, Clyde., Jackson, Wilfred., Luske, Hamilton. With Peggy Lee, Barbara Luddy, Larry Roberts, ,Bill Thompson, Bill Baucom, Stan Freberg, Verna

Felton, Alan, et al., George Givot, Dallas McKennon, Lee Millar, The Mellomen. Buena Vista Distribution, 1955.

Lévy-Willard, Annette. "Paris, le 11 septembre 2001" *South Central Review* Summer-Autumn, 2002. Vol. 19, No. 2/3, 9/11, 73-76.

The Little Mermaid. Dir. Ron Clements, John Musker. With Jodi Benson, Samuel E. Wright, Pat Carroll, Christopher Daniel Barnes, Kenneth Mars, Jason Marin, Buddy Hackett. Buena Vista Distribution, 1989.

The Lion King. Dir. Roger Allers, Rob Minkoff. With Matthew Broderick, James Earl Jones, Jeremy Irons, Jonathan Taylor Thomas, Nathan Lane, Ernie Sabella, Robert Guillaume, Mo'Nique, Rowan Atkinson, Whoopi Goldberg, Cheech Marin, Jim Cummings. Walt Disney Productions, 1994.

Monsters, Inc. Dir. Peter Docter, Lee Unkrich (co-director), David Silverman (co-director). With John Goodman, Billy Crystal, Jennifer Tilly. Walt Disney Productions, 2001

Morris, Jim. "Dinosaur in the Delta: Farmers Tame Prehistoric Fish to Make Food Fit for a King" *California Farm Bureau Federation*. August 3, 2005.

Palmer, Joan. *The Illustrated Encyclopedia of Dog Breeds*. The Well Fleet Press, 1994

Pastoureau, Michel. "Heraldry: Its Origins and Meaning" *Thames and Hudson* 1997

"The Politics of German Unification: "History Will Punish Those Who Arrive Too Late" *International Studies Review* Spring, 2000, Vol. 2, No.1, 101-111

Roger, Philippe. Trans. Bowman, Sharon. "The American Enemy: the History of French Anti-Americanism" *University of Chicago Press* 2005

Salvatore, Dominique. "The Euro, the European Central Bank, and the International Monetary System." *Analyses of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* Jan., 2002, Vol. 579, 153-167.

Shrek. Dir. Andrew Adamson, Vicky Jenson. With Mike Myers, Eddie Murphy, Cameron Diaz, John Lithgow. DreamWorks, 2001

Shrek II. Dir. Andrew Adamson, Kelly Asbury, Conrad Vernon. With Mike Myers, Eddie Murphy, Cameron Diaz, Julie Andrews, Antonio Banderas, John Cleese, Rupert Everett, Jennifer Saunders. DreamWorks, 2004.

The Simpsons. Creators James L. Brooks, Matt Groening, Sam Simon. With Dan Castellaneta, Julie Kavner, Nancy Cartwright, Yeardley Smith, Hank Azaria, Harry Shearer, Marcia Wallace, Pamela Hayden, Tress MacNeille, Maggie Roswell, Russi Taylor, Marcia Mitzman Gaven. Fox, 1989

Sleeping Beauty. Dir. Clyde Geronimi (supervising), Les Clark, Eric Larson, Wolfgang Reitherman. With Mary Costa, Eleanor Audley, Verna Felton, Barbara Luddy, Barbara Jo Allen, Bill Shirley, Taylor Holmes, Bill Thompson. Buena Vista Distribution, 1959.

Vaisse, Justin. "American Francophobia Takes a New Turn" French *Politics, Culture and Society* 2003, Vol. 21

Wilson, Jamie. "French Fries Protester Regrets War Jibe" *The Guardian* May 25, 2005

Wood, Ean. *The Josephine Baker Story*. Pictorial Press, 2000.